

Programs and Policies⁴

4.0 Overview

The creation and implementation of a successful pedestrian system will involve more than facility improvements. The long-term success will also depend on use and support of pedestrian facilities. The following recommended programs will aid Holly Springs in educating pedestrians about safe behaviors in a multimodal roadway environment, enforcing laws that make pedestrian travel safer, and encouraging people of all ages and abilities to use the pedestrian network for the promotion of health and wellness. The adoption of the proposed policy revisions in this chapter will ensure that the growing Town of Holly Springs will continue to grow and evolve as a pedestrian friendly environment for all generations to enjoy.

4.1 Programs

Public Education

The Town of Holly Springs should encourage the development of a local pedestrian advocacy group and a variety of safety materials for distribution. A local advocacy group is a beneficial resource to promote safe pedestrian travel, provide feedback for opportunities and obstacles within the pedestrian system, and coordinate events and education and outreach opportunities. Educational materials can focus on safe behaviors, rules, and responsibilities. Information may include important pedestrian laws, 5 to 10 keys to safe pedestrian travel, safe motor vehicle operation around pedestrians, and general facility rules and regulations. This safety information can be distributed through brochures, newsletters, newspapers, and other print media that can be inserted into routine mailings. It can also be posted on municipal websites and shown on local cable access television. Events, such as Bass Lake Day and HollyFest should be utilized to distribute information and a representative from the pedestrian advocacy group can answer any questions related to pedestrian safety. A booth could also be used to display safety information at various community events.

Action

Encourage the formation of a local pedestrian advocacy group



*Figure 4(a):
Hubs of recreational activities, such as the Hunt Community Center, provide great opportunities to promote the pedestrian system.*

Action

Produce a variety of safety materials for distribution to various age groups and at various events/locations

Internal Education

Agency staff and members of local planning and review boards should participate in annual training sessions on integrating pedestrian travel into all projects. Internal training will be essential to institutionalizing pedestrian issues into the everyday operations of the engineering, planning, and parks & recreation departments. This training should cover all aspects of the transportation and development process, including planning, design, development review, construction, and maintenance. This type of 'inreach' can be in the form of brown bag lunches, professional certification programs and special sessions or conferences. Pedestrian planning and design issues are complex, and national research and guidelines continue to evolve. Therefore, training sessions need to be updated and repeated on a regular basis.

Also, local law enforcement should be trained in accurate reporting of pedestrian crashes involving automobiles. In many communities, police do not always adequately understand the rights of pedestrians. Proper interpretation of individual circumstances and events is critical for proper enforcement and respect between motorists and pedestrians. Special training sessions should be instituted and occur annually for new employees within the Police Department that focus on laws relating to pedestrian travel.

Action

Holly Springs should sponsor annual training sessions for Pedestrian Design/Review

Action

Holly Springs should sponsor a session for new members of Law Enforcement focusing on Pedestrian Issues

Resources

America Walks is a national coalition of local advocacy groups dedicated to promoting walkable communities. Their mission is to foster the development of community-based pedestrian advocacy groups, to educate the public about the benefits of walking, and, when appropriate, to act as a collective voice for walking advocates. They provide a support network for local pedestrian advocacy groups. To get started visit their website,

<http://americawalks.org>



*Figure 4(b):
Properly trained Crossing Guards can
greatly improve the safety of crossing condi-
tions for school commuters.*

Safe Communities is a project of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Nine agencies within the U.S. Department of Transportation are working together to promote and implement a safer national transportation system by combining the best injury prevention practices into the Safe Communities approach to serve as a model throughout the nation. To get them involved, start by visiting their website,

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/safecommunities/>

Safe Kids Worldwide is a global network of organizations whose mission is to prevent accidental childhood injury, a leading killer of children 14 and under. More than 450 coalitions in 15 countries bring together health and safety experts, educators, corporations, foundations, governments and volunteers to educate and protect families. Visit their website to receive information about programs, involving media events, device distribution and hands-on educational activities for kids and their families:

<http://www.usa.safekids.org/>

Motorist Enforcement

Based on crash data analysis and observed patterns of behavior, law enforcement can use targeted enforcement to focus on key issues such as motorists speeding, not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks, parking on sidewalks, etc.. Sidewalk parking, for example, is often not enforced but should be, to maintain pedestrian accessibility, avoid maintenance issues, and comply with Town ordinances. All of these key issues should be targeted and enforced consistently. The goal is for pedestrians and motorists to recognize and respect each other's rights on the roadway.

As traffic continues to increase on North Carolina's streets and highways, concern has grown over the safety of our children as they walk to and from school. At the same time, health agencies, alarmed at the increase in obesity and inactivity among children, are encouraging parents and communities to get their children walking and biking to school. In response, the Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation funded a study on pedestrian issues, including school zone safety, and decided to establish a consistent training program for law enforcement officers responsible for school crossing guards. According to the office of the North Carolina Attorney General, school crossing guards may be considered traffic control officers when proper training is provided as specified in GS 20-114.1.

Action

Target and enforce all illegal motorist behavior that may jeopardize the success of the Town's Pedestrian Network

Action

Require all Crossing Guards to complete an NCDOT Crossing Guard Training Program

Pedestrian Enforcement

Observations made by local trail and pedestrian facility users can be utilized to identify any conflicts or issues that require attention. To maintain proper use of trail facilities, volunteers could be used to patrol the trails, particularly on the most popular trails and on days of heavy use. The volunteer patrol can report any suspicious or unlawful activity, as well as answer any questions a trail user may have. The volunteer patrol could be a responsibility of the pedestrian advocacy group. When users of the pedestrian network witness unlawful activities, they should have a simple way of reporting the issue to police. A hot line should be created, which would compliment the Trail Patrol Programs, for people to call in and talk to a live operator or to leave a voice mail message about the activity they witnessed. Accidents can also be reported to this hot line. Accident locations can then be mapped to prioritize and support necessary facility improvements.

Action

Establish a local "Trail Patrol"

Action

Establish an Enforcement Hot line

Resources

NCDOT School Crossing Guard Program

http://www.ncdot.org/transit/bicycle/safety/programs_initiatives/crossing.html

NCDOT's A Guide to North Carolina Bicycle and Pedestrian Laws. For an online resource guide on laws related to pedestrian and bicycle safety (provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration), visit www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/resourceguide/index.html

Encouragement**School Programs**

Currently, Holly Springs has a newly constructed high school, a middle school and 3 elementary schools. Although the

surrounding land uses to these school facilities are favorable, mostly residential or open space, the Town of Holly Springs is rapidly growing. The sidewalk system adjacent to school properties is inadequate. Gaps between sidewalk segments exist, preventing safe travel between neighborhoods and the schools. Crosswalk improvements are also needed. Access to off-road facilities, such as greenways, is limited. Many programs exist to aid communities in developing safer pedestrian facilities around schools. Other programs can be adopted by parents or the schools to provide initiatives for walking or biking. Information is available to encourage group travel, prevent pedestrian related injuries, and sponsor commuter related events. A “Walking School Bus” is an encouragement program that provides an alternative way to transport children to school. A parent can be responsible for accompanying a group of children to school by utilizing the pedestrian system in Holly Springs.

Awareness Days/Events

A specific day of the year can be devoted to a theme to raise awareness and celebrate issues relating to that theme. The following are examples of events that the Town of Holly Springs can use or modify to improve usage of pedestrian facilities:

Walk to Work Day/International Car Free Day

Designate one day a year for people to walk to work to help advance programs, promote active living, and raise awareness for environmental issues. Walk to Work Day can be at the end of an entire week or month of pedestrian promotional activities, including fitness expos, walking and jogging group activities, running and bicycling races and rides, etc.

Annual Pedestrian Day

This could be an annual event to celebrate the Town’s pedestrian achievements for the year. Awards for pedestrian commuters, as well as booths, contests, and other events could be incorporated.

National Trails Day

This event is held every year in June. Other events, competitions, races, and tours can be held simultaneously to promote trail use within Holly Springs. The Parks and



*Figure 4(c):
Encouragement programs, such as Safe Routes to School, provide assistance to communities for pedestrian improvements to commuter corridors, encouraging kids to bike or walk to school.*

Recreation-Trails Division sponsors National Trails Day for the City of Greensboro every year and it has become a huge event for the City.

Alternative Uses for Facilities

Another way to promote usage is to promote alternative uses for facilities. Skateboarding or rollerblading could be included as a use on specific trails for a specified day every month during the summer, to encourage activity. If an activity is allowed with set rules and regulations and at a set time, destruction or abuse of facilities for unintended uses would be reduced.

Use Facilities to Promote Other Causes

Network facilities could be used for events that promote other causes, such as health awareness. Not only does the event raise money/publicity for a specific cause, but it encourages and promotes healthy living and an active lifestyle, while raising awareness for pedestrian activities. Non-profit organizations such as the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, and the Red Cross sponsor events such as Breast Cancer Walk, Diabetes Walk, Juvenile Diabetes Walk, etc.

Action

Encourage children to walk to school, safely, through a combination of programs, listed under encouragement resources

Action

Establish awareness days

Interpretive Trails/Guided Tours

An educational component to the pedestrian network could be added by developing historical, cultural, and environmental themes for the facilities. This idea can be adapted to create walking tours throughout the Town, using signage, to identify the events, architecture, and landmarks that make the Town of Holly Springs unique. These tours should be simple to navigate and should stand alone as an amenity. However, brochures can be used to supplement signage with more detailed information and a map of the tour. Other ideas to supplement the signage could be organized “talks” or lectures by local experts.

Action

Create a Self-Guided Walking Tour of Historical/Cultural Sites in Downtown



Figure 4(d):

Existing trails, such as the Springs of Holly Springs Nature Trail, could be improved with the addition of interpretive signage to showcase plants, historical points of interest, or significant features along the trail.

Action

Establish an environmental tour of creek/springs

Action

Establish a Walking Tour that follows the original railroad alignment wherever possible (i.e. not through private property).

Action

Establish outdoor classrooms-utilizing open space, parks, greenways, etc.

Art in the Landscape

The inclusion of art along trail and pedestrian corridors would encourage use of facilities and provide a place for artwork and healthy expression to occur. Artwork could be displayed in a variety of ways and through an assortment of materials. Living artwork could be “painted” through the design and planting of various plant materials. Sculpture could be arranged as an outdoor museum. Art through movement and expression could be displayed during certain hours during the day or during seasonal events. An “Art Walk” could be established as an event along a trail. The National Mall in Washington D.C. has the National Gallery Sculpture Garden, an outdoor art museum that attracts thousands of visitors each year. Artwork can be provided by local schools, special interest clubs and organizations, or donated in honor or memory of someone.

Pedestrian Activities as Clubs

The Town of Holly Springs has numerous organizations that could be utilized to promote pedestrian activities. Education, enforcement, and encouragement programs can be advertised and discussed in club newsletters, seminars, and committee meetings. The following are suggested target groups or ideas to support the development of new clubs and organizations:

Homeowner Associations

After the Town of Holly Springs updates the new development policies relating to pedestrian facility incorporation, more pedestrian facilities will emerge. HOA’s could be a source for promoting neighborhood walks, clean-ups, and routine maintenance tasks.

Walking/Running Clubs

Neighborhoods or large businesses could promote walking or

running clubs for local residents or employees to meet at a designated area and exercise before work, every Wednesday afternoon, or on a lunch break. This informal group could be advertised on local bulletin or information boards. These clubs could be specialized to attract different interest groups.

- Mother's Morning Club (Mom's with strollers)
- Walking Wednesdays (Senior group)
- Lunch Bunch (group from the municipal building runs during lunch hour)

Adopt-A-Trail

Local clubs and organizations provide great volunteer services for maintaining and patrolling trails. This idea could be extended to follow tour routes or specified streets/sidewalks. A sign to recognize the club or organization could be posted as an incentive to sustain high quality volunteer service.

Resources

Safe Routes to School is a national program with \$612 million dedicated from Congress from 2005 to 2009. Local Safe Routes to School programs are sustained by parents, community leaders, and citizens to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school.

Recently, the state of North Carolina has started the NC Safe Routes to School Program based off of the national program. The state has \$15 million over the next 5 years for infrastructure improvements within 2 miles of schools. This funding can also be used towards the development of school related programs to improve safety and walkability initiatives. The state requires the completion of a competitive application to apply for funding and a workshop at the school to determine what improvements are needed. <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

National Walk our Children to School Day is usually held in October with the objective to encourage adults to teach children to practice safe pedestrian behavior, to identify safe routes to school, and to remind everyone of the health benefits of walking. To register walking events in Holly Springs, go to the main webpage, and follow the International Walk to School links: www.walktoschool-usa.org

Walk a Child to School in North Carolina. Forty years ago, half of all U.S. school children walked to school. Today, according to the Centers for Disease Control, only an estimated 10 percent walk to school. In many communities as much as 30 percent of morning commuter traffic is generated by parents driving their children to school. These traffic habits and children's lifestyle choices can have serious consequences. Traffic jams around our schools foul the air, waste fuel, and create safety problems for children. In addition, the U.S. Surgeon General recently reported that thirteen percent of children aged 6 to 11 years and 14 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 19 were overweight in 1999. This statistic has nearly tripled in the past two decades for adolescents. A



*Figure 4(e):
The newly constructed High School was designed to accommodate pedestrian commuter traffic.*

growing number of community groups throughout the nation, such as health professionals, Smart Growth advocates, traffic safety groups, local PTAs, and elected officials, are promoting walking to school initiatives. Some states have passed legislation instituting “Safe Routes to Schools” programs to encourage schoolchildren to walk or bike to school. The primary emphasis of these programs is to provide children with an opportunity to walk or bike to school in a safe, secure environment. In North Carolina, Walk a Child to School Programs have gained a foothold and are growing each year. To date more than 5,000 students in 12 communities in the state have participated.

The web site offers a history of **Walk to School Day**, child pedestrian information, resources for planning events and online registration. <http://www.walktoschool.org>

Preventing Pedestrian Crashes: Preschool/Elementary School Children provides information to parents on pedestrian risks for preschool and elementary school children. Safe and Sober Campaign. Taken from the NHTSA website. <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/outreach/safesobr/15qp/web/sbprevent.html>

Kidswalk-to-School is a resource guide to help communities develop and implement a year-long walk-to-school initiative. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/kidswalk_guide.htm

Safekids is a child safety information website. Pedestrian injury remains the third leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 5 to 14. <http://www.safekids.org/>

Pedestrian Fatalities Related to School Travel is a fact sheet pertaining to school age children. NHTSA. http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/ped/Getting_to_School/pedestrian.html

Rules of the Road for Grandchildren: Safety Tips is an information website for grandparenting. If you are a grandparent, you can play an important role in teaching your grandchildren the “rules of the road.” AARP. <http://www.aarp.org/confacts/grandparents/rulesroad.html>

Streets in America are unsafe and unforgiving for kids Article by the Pedestrian Safety Roadshow. U.S. Department of Transportation. Federal Highway Administration. <http://www.tfhr.gov/safety/pedbike/articles/unsafe.htm>

Focusing on the Child Pedestrian Pedestrian Information from the FHWA. <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roaduser/pdf/PedFacts.pdf>

Stepping Out-Older Adult Education on Pedestrian Safety www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/olddrive/SteppingOut/index.html



Figure 4(f):
“Walking School Buses” provide a safe way to transport children to school and foster outdoor exercise. Here children walk near Womble Park.

Programs to Generate Revenue

Holly Springs should be proactive in increasing revenue from programs and events that can help fund the building, management, and maintenance of future facilities. It will be necessary for staff to be assigned to focus on programming, researching further program ideas, and work with local groups, non-profits, schools, and citizens to develop programs further. Local foundations and agencies could organize and host events.

An increase in these types of events and an increase in promotion and advertising will help increase interest and attendance. Promotion can occur through local media, newspaper, and websites. Fees should be increased in events annually or biannually to increase revenue. Specific program and event ideas that are being used across the country include:



Figure 4(g):

Even children who ride the bus to and from school should be knowledgeable about safe pedestrian travel.

- Races/triathlons (fees and donations)
- Concessions
- Educational walks/Nature walks
- Fund-raisers including dinners/galas
- Moonlight bike rides and walks
- Greenway parade
- Concerts
- Art events along greenway
- Events coincident with other local events such as fairs, festivals, historic/folk events, etc.

4.2 Pedestrian-Related Policies in Holly Springs

This section outlines existing pedestrian-related policies in the Town of Holly Springs and recommends specific steps to strengthen those policies. The recommendations below were developed by first analyzing existing policies, then comparing them to national standards and other local state-of-the-art pedestrian initiatives. Representatives from the Town of Holly Springs Department of Planning & Zoning, Department of Engineering, Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee have provided guidance for these recommendations. Action steps for implementation are provided throughout this chapter, and can also be found in the overall list of action steps provided in Chapter 5, Implementation.

Several key requirements for pedestrian facilities are listed

below. These and other requirements for creating a safe and convenient environment for pedestrian transportation should be integrated into all policy documents for the Town of Holly Springs. They apply to all new roadway construction and roadway reconstruction projects in the downtown, suburban, and rural areas, as appropriate (e.g., areas where new developments are being constructed).

- Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of all collector, subcollector, and local streets (except for short cul-de-sacs, permanent dead-end streets, and roadways in areas with rural development (e.g., less than one dwelling unit per 6 acres).
- Sidewalks should have a minimum width of five feet but should be wider where pedestrian traffic is higher.
- The buffer space between the sidewalk and the curb and gutter should be maximized within the available right-of-way. 4' is suggested as an absolute minimum. Larger buffers are preferred for street tree health and pedestrian comfort.
- Raised medians or pedestrian refuge islands should be provided, where practical, at crosswalks on streets with more than three lanes, especially on streets with high volumes of traffic. They should be six- to ten-feet wide.
- Pedestrians and bicyclists should be accommodated on roadway bridges, underpasses, and interchanges and on any other roadways that are impacted by a bridge, underpass, or interchange project (except on roadways where they are prohibited by law). All new bridges should be constructed with bicycle lanes and wide sidewalks.
- On multi-lane roadways with excess existing and future traffic capacity, underutilized travel lanes should be removed. This extra right-of-way space should be used for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Developers should be required to provide alternative transportation connections between developments to provide connectivity.

More recommended changes to specific policy documents are provided below in **bold**, along with excerpts from those documents that are related to pedestrian planning. For summary descriptions of each document, please refer to Section 2.2, Existing Planning Efforts, in Chapter Two.

Village District Area Plan (VDAP)

Sections of the VDAP that relate most to pedestrian planning include the following:

Land Use:

- “Celebrate the history of Holly Springs with a ‘history walk’ or other means of connecting a collection of historic structures and sites in the Village District. Integrated into the fabric of the Village District this walk could become part of the set of attractors that bring people into the District.” The plan then lists the Town’s historic assets. (VDAP, p.13)
- “As recommended in the Market Study, the Town should participate in small projects that link existing and proposed amenities and civic anchors, creating a true pedestrian-oriented area.” (VDAP, p.13)

The Core Area:

- A critical feature of the VDAP includes a “Strong pedestrian linkage between the Town Hall and the Library and Cultural Center.” (VDAP, p.19)

Transportation, Access & Circulation:

- “Creating true accessibility will require the provision of clear and safe routes through the district in the form of an enhanced, well-connected street network with facilities to accommodate motorized and non-motorized traffic.” (VDAP, p.25)
- “Provide better collector street connections between residential communities and the Village District by incorporating bicycle and pedestrian elements. (VDAP, p.25)